

Executive Update

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker's Weekly Newsletter

August 17, 2007

Message from County Executive Walker

A Milwaukee Journal Sentinel editorial suggested I reconsider my tax pledge in order to benefit the transit system. First, let's do the math. Even with all of the budget reductions in department requests, the county still has \$25.7 million yet to balance to get to a zero levy. The paper suggests we raise the levy by \$13.7 million.

\$25.7 million - \$13.7 million = \$12 million.

That's right. The county would still have to find \$12 million in reductions just to balance the budget WITH the maximum tax levy increase allowed under state law. The numbers show we can not raise taxes enough to avoid major budget reductions.

Knowing the importance of the bus routes for many people to get to work, school or doctors, I will consider reductions elsewhere in the budget to help preserve routes.

Second, why would we raise taxes on the people who already subsidize the bus system, which receives 65-70% of its funding from state aid from the transportation fund? People who drive cars and trucks pay for the fund through the gas tax and registration fees. Vehicle drivers already heavily subsidize the transit system.

Third. There is no "cushion" in our tax levy. Higher property taxes will only drive people and jobs out of the county.

I will not raise property taxes to pay for the excessive pension and sick leave packages of the past. I made a promise to the voters in 2002 and again in 2004 to not raise the tax levy from the previous year. I plan on keeping that promise.

Scott



Walker Completes Budget Workshop Series



County Executive Walker held the final Budget Workshop at the Washington Park Senior Center this week. Budget requests from each department were presented by department heads after the County Executive explained the budget process and status. Input gathered from those in attendance is considered while determining the proposed budget that will be presented at the end of September.

Lakeside Senior Center



Walker joins members of the Lakeside Senior Enrichment Center for lunch and discussion on county issues

HOC Security Issues



County Executive Walker ordered additional security improvements at the House of Correction to address issues associated with the escape of an inmate. Measures include improving the line of visibility with landscape adjustments, removing county vehicles from inside the perimeter, additional lighting and sensors, routine checks on bolts and rivets, request for capital money for camera installation, extra razor wire in high – risk areas, and enclosing windows with bricks in oldest part of the facility. Joining Walker at the news conference were Franklin Mayor Tom Taylor, HOC Superintendent Ron Malone, Franklin Police Chief Rick Oliva and members of the HOC staff.

Walker attends community events



County Executive Walker was joined by Franklin Alderman Ken Skowronski on Fox6TV with Gus Gnorski to talk about the Sports Complex and Franklin Family Days taking place this weekend. Walker also attended the Irish Fest opening, American Lung Association kickoff luncheon, Marquette University's President's Picnic, and promoted Zoo A La Carte on Fox6 Wakeup.

National Veterans Wheelchair Games



NVWG Coordinator Brian Walker, Dean Martell – NVWG co-chair, Walker, Gus Sorenson – WPVA Government Relations Director, Phil Rosenberg – Pres. WPVA, Don Fell – WPVA Exec.Dir., and Dr. Ken Lee – NVWG co-chair

NVWG committee members presented Walker and Milwaukee County with certificates of appreciation this week for the county's assistance in hosting the games in June. The games were hosted by the Milwaukee VA Medical Center and the Wisconsin Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America.

Elderly and Disabled Housing Initiative



County Executive Walker signed a resolution approving the formation of a work group to identify all county-owned land that could potentially be used for affordable and accessible housing benefiting "Family Care" qualified senior and disabled citizens. Stephanie Sue Stein and Greg Reiman from the Department on Aging, Don Natzke from the Office for Persons with Disabilities, Geri Lyday from Disabilities Services, and CEO Erich Schwenker and representatives from Cardinal Capital Management Inc. attended.